

# Workforce Observations

## For The North Central WDA

### November, 2002



### *Employment Picture Takes On Seasonal Appearance In October*

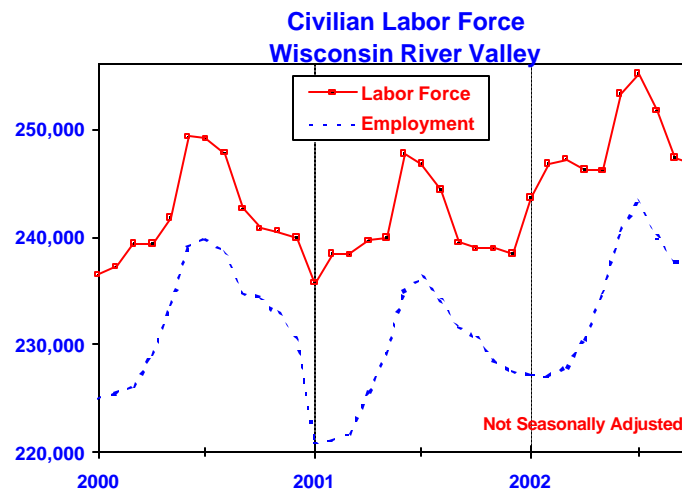
The job picture in the month of October certainly has the aspect of a fall month, with declining employment numbers nearly everywhere around the district and the state. The unemployment rate fell from the previous month in five of the nine Wisconsin River District counties, a falloff that reflects declining manufacturing activity, a pause in the tourist activity of certain areas, and perhaps local manifestation of broader economic sluggishness.

The unemployment rate of the entire district itself was just over four percent, a slight drop of a few tenths of a percentage point from the September rate, and identical to last October's rate. (It is good to keep in mind, however, that these rates of unemployment are historically rather low, compared to most years since 1980.)

As usual, it is probably better to look, not at the rate of unemployment, but at the actual number of people

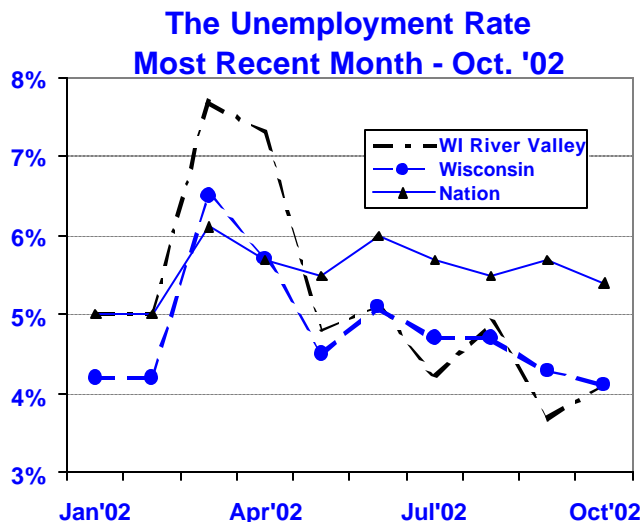
working, because the unemployment rate is the percentage of people in the labor force not working, and doesn't really tell us about the whole job picture. In the district as a whole, the number of people working went down from September by several hundred workers, but was higher than last October by almost 900. The falloff from September in the number of

people working was purely a seasonal move in the labor market, but that increase from 12 months ago can probably be interpreted as a plus for the general economic picture of the River District. It would appear that we are entering the slower, colder months in fairly good shape.



### *All Counties In October -*

Looking at the major industrial sectors for October compared to last month shows rather small declines in most industrial sectors. In manufacturing, job levels dropped off by far less than 1,000, mainly in the area of nondurable goods employment. This may be accounted for by cutbacks in certain food processing operations in the District and is probably normal seasonal decline. In a field of over 42,000 jobs, this is certainly not a significant number of workers, most of whom probably expected the layoffs. Compared to the same month of last year, there was a decline of about 2,200 positions (mainly in durable goods). This is a somewhat different matter, and cannot really be accounted for by seasonal factors, but may represent more or less permanent layoffs. But again, compared to the total of manufacturing employment, the number is significant, but still a small percentage.



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We are presently housed at a temporary location at Tripod and  
can be found at this addie—  
<http://freelmi.tripod.com/maracent.html>

The employment picture in total trade is a somewhat different. Employment numbers were up slightly in October compared to the previous month, by about 400 jobs. This rather small increase appeared to have taken place in the Core Counties of Marathon, Wood, and Portage where the job gains in trade almost amounted to 1,000 jobs. This was offset with a decline in the Northern Counties of the district of about 450 positions. It could be

that the full impact of seasonal layoffs in the north associated with the end of the summer tourist season accounts for this decline in trade employment. Employment levels in service were off a bit throughout the District compared to September, but gained over last October. It is generally true that occupations in this sector are increasing everywhere, throughout the area and the state, part of a major change in the general occupational picture.



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*<http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/>*

Month of October	Adams	Forest	Lang.	Lincoln	Mara.	Oneida	Portage	Vilas	Wood	Region
<b>Labor Force</b>	8,525	5,086	9,743	14,610	76,583	21,399	38,377	11,543	41,442	227,308
Employed	8,212	4,831	9,154	13,946	74,111	20,392	37,233	11,217	39,912	219,008
Unemployed	313	255	589	664	2,472	1,007	1,144	326	1,530	8,300
Unemployment rate(%)	3.7	5.0	6.0	4.5	3.2	4.7	3.0	2.8	3.7	3.7%
<b>Total, all industries**</b>	4,212	3,583	8,077	12,258	71,263	18,406	33,943	8,772	45,858	206,372
Construction & Mining	195	117	366	373	2,865	1,500	1,043	968	1,648	9,075
Manufacturing	431	457	1,630	3,878	18,167	1,744	6,072	458	9,419	42,256
Transportation & Util.	204	280	445	522	4,312	702	2,089	214	3,422	12,190
Wholesale Trade	122	39	336	456	5,468	537	1,476	252	1,531	10,217
Retail Trade	837	501	1,818	2,230	13,678	5,093	6,480	2,448	8,446	41,531
FIRE	101	104	265	741	4,735	449	3,587	293	958	11,233
Services	1,074	474	1,949	1,935	14,097	5,582	7,250	1,833	14,957	49,151
Government	1,248	1,611	2,168	2,123	7,941	2,799	5,946	2,306	5,477	30,719
Change from previous mo.	Adams	Forest	Lang.	Lincoln	Mara.	Oneida	Portage	Vilas	Wood	Region
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	-395	-22	149	176	540	-526	-130	-243	119	-332
Employed	-425	-33	141	162	626	-478	47	-263	338	115
Unemployed	30	11	8	14	-86	-48	-177	20	-219	-447
Unemployment rate(%)	0.5	0.2	-0.1	0.0	-0.2	-0.1	-0.4	0.2	-0.5	0.0
<b>Total, all industries**</b>	-229	76	76	121	457	-248	47	-429	347	218
Construction & Mining	-5	-3	-3	15	-10	-23	-39	-8	-56	-132
Manufacturing	-2	-3	-3	44	82	-20	-606	-10	-126	-644
Transportation & Util.	4	14	14	69	83	25	23	-13	47	266
Wholesale Trade	-4	-4	-4	55	-18	-9	10	1	53	80
Retail Trade	-6	13	13	-36	215	-187	267	-220	315	374
FIRE	5	-1	-1	1	24	-14	0	-6	5	13
Services	-224	-22	-22	-48	-20	-172	-3	-220	-69	-800
Government	3	82	82	21	101	152	395	47	178	1,061
Change from year ago	Adams	Forest	Lang.	Lincoln	Mara.	Oneida	Portage	Vilas	Wood	Region
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	566	106	302	103	2,812	860	1,316	313	889	7,267
Employed	536	50	335	36	2,581	543	1,301	299	695	6,376
Unemployed	30	56	-33	67	231	317	15	14	194	891
Unemployment rate(%)	0.1	1.0	-0.6	0.4	0.2	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0
<b>Total, all industries**</b>	161	309	-20	-139	377	-95	695	383	-324	1,347
Construction & Mining	18	-8	-106	-241	-761	76	-251	-110	-324	-1,707
Manufacturing	38	-62	-102	-310	-667	-416	-175	-64	-515	-2,273
Transportation & Util.	22	45	28	36	200	-10	141	-48	89	503
Wholesale Trade	10	-4	-121	-2	256	151	-144	111	11	268
Retail Trade	-57	14	-50	-119	1,512	21	738	313	-164	2,208
FIRE	-1	8	4	485	-133	-14	-64	-23	37	299
Services	158	-32	336	65	16	176	-204	-68	696	1,143
Government	-27	348	-9	-53	-46	-79	654	272	-154	906

\* Includes participants residing in area. \*\* Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: [WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)  
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